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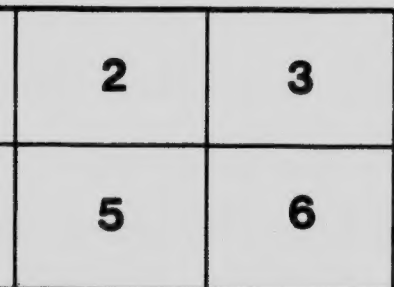
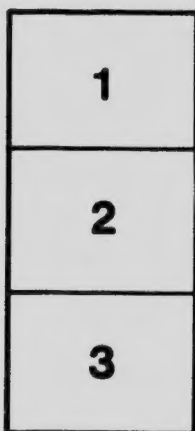
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OUR
UNDERPAID CLERGY

SPEECH DELIVERED BY

MR. W. P. SWEATMAN,

HON. TREASURER

Diocese of Rupert's Land,

BEFORE THE SYNOD,

June 1906.

Printed by request of the Synod.

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA
GENERAL SYNOD, ARCHIVES

A substantially verbatim report of a speech delivered by Mr. W. P. Sweatman, Hon. Treasurer of the Diocese of Rupert's Land, in submitting to the Synod at its meeting in June, the following resolution :

"That the resolution regarding Stipends of the Clergy, adopted at the last Synod, be amended to read as follows :"

"That the Stipend of a Deacon shall be not less than \$800, per annum."

"That the Stipend of a Priest in the first year of his Priesthood shall be not less than \$900, per annum ; and than after five year's service as a Priest in the Diocese the stipend shall be not less than \$1000, per annum, together with a free house in the case of all married Priests."

"That all stipends be paid monthly or quarterly."

"That this matter be referred to the Executive Committee to devise such a method as will assure the giving effect to the above scale, and that the Executive Committee report upon the method adopted to the Synod at its next meeting."

(Adopted unanimously.)

YOUR GRACE:—

In submitting this resolution for the consideration of this House I hope that I realize the great importance of the question involved, affecting most vitally as it does the interests of both the Clergy and the Church throughout the Diocese. As your Grace well knows this question of Clerical Stipends has been on my mind for many a long day. Last year I had determined to submit a similar motion, but learning from Your Grace at the before Synod of your own determination to take up the subject in your Synodical address a very strong and earnest utterance on this subject, I cheerfully stood aside, recognizing that Your Grace's words, as our Spiritual Leader, would have much greater weight with the Laity than anything I could say, as well as the most natural appropriateness of your leadership in a matter so vitally affecting your Clergy and the Church.

On the occasion referred to Your Grace spoke as follows:—

SALARIES OF CLERGY.

"First, we look at our men, our clergymen, I mean. I have visited well-nigh all of them during the past year and a half, so that I know whereof I speak. They are doing very arduous work. Theirs is a strenuous life. Their missions are large and unwieldly. Their journeys in all weathers are very long. As true men they may expect to endure hardness. They would not be followers of their great Example if they did not deny self and take up the Cross and follow Him. But, my brethren of the Laity, I wish to say this to you:—These men in most instances are grievously underpaid. We cannot hope to secure good men and keep them at the meagre salaries we are pay-

ing. The expense of living has increased very appreciably in this country, yet I know devoted men in this Diocese who have been endeavouring to maintain a wife and family, keep a horse, and in some cases, two horses, on a salary under \$700, per annum, and that irregularly paid. These things ought not so to be. A man simply cannot live respectably as a gentleman, work heartily and hold up his head as a man who owes nobody anything except to love him—a man cannot do that, on the pittance which many of our men are receiving. Now, I am not laying the blame of this on anyone in particular. I think, however, that the fault lies in many cases in a want of proper business methods in church finance, in a lack of prompt action, and in allowing things to drift. I earnestly ask this meeting of Synod to take up this matter very seriously, and, if possible, devise some remedy. The minimum salary of a Clergyman should, I think, be not less than \$800, per annum, with a free house, and this salary should be paid quarterly."

Weighty words these ! And in discussing this matter to-day I desire, if I may, to re-echo them to the lay representatives present and through them especially to the laity throughout the length and breadth of this great Diocese.

Notwithstanding the information I had as the result of many years observation, I resolved, in order to a still better understanding of the real condition of affairs, to make it possible for the Clergy themselves to speak on this delicate subject, and to this end addressed to them a series of questions, which, taking the Synod into my confidence, I will now read :

" CONFIDENTIAL.

Rev. & Dear Sir.—

I have given notice that the resolution affecting Clerical Stipends, passed at the last Synod, be reconsidered at our next meeting.

In this connection, I desire to collect some data in order to a better understanding of this important matter. Without intruding I hope, on the privacy of the personal affairs of the Clergy, I venture to seek information in respect to the particulars following :

1. Have you a Parsonage ?
 A, If not, does the Parish or Mission provide a free house?
 B, If not, what is your annual rental?
2. What was the total stipend paid you in cash from Easter 1905 to Easter 1906?
 A, Are contributions in kind general?
 B, If so, do such affect appreciably your stipend?
3. What method of payment of your stipend obtains?
 A, Is it regularly so paid?
 B, If not, please briefly indicate the manner of payment.
4. Do you keep a horse or team?
 A, If so, what is the annual cost to you of maintenance?
5. How long have you been in the Diocese?
 A, Have you taken an annual or bi-annual vacation?
 B, If not, give the number taken?
 C, Has your stipend had any bearing on your not having taken regular vacations.
6. In the case of a married cleric, is it possible, exercising reasonable economy, to provide adequate home comforts, as well as for the proper and befitting education of the children, under the total stipend now received and *keep free entirely* from debt.?

7. Please add here any other information you may deem desirable in the premises.

In submitting these questions I have but one great purpose to serve—and that is the promotion of the temporal welfare of the Clergy. If given, the information should assist one to arouse the Synod, which ought to take the initiative, to a much greater sense of its responsibility in this matter.

If for any reason you should be disinclined to answer all, or indeed any, of these questions well and good—your decision will be respected.

In submitting to Synod any information as to the condition of affairs, I will be careful to omit names of both Clergy and Mission."

For obvious reasons I omitted the Winnipeg Clergy and the important parishes of Brandon and Fortage la Prairie.

Fellow-laymen, the large number of replies which I have in hand reveals a condition of affairs which, to say the least, is most painful and pathetic. But to the splendid nobility of these men be it said that not a single complaint—not a single murmur—is heard. As many an one has said—"I am not complaining. You asked for facts and I am giving them to you." Your Grace—I am profoundly touched by the splendid spirit of self denial so uncomplainingly borne by your Clergy as they, from week to week,

try to serve their Lord and His Church, ministering to the spiritual wants of an ever growing population distributed over our vast prairies. The large number of unwieldy missions, with the consequent mu c

driving both on the Sunday and during the week—if the people are to be visited in their homes—constitute a severe strain on the physical strength of your Clergy—especially during the severe winter months, and, as is plain to us all, many are growing prematurely old in the Church's service.

And now my fellow laymen allow me to direct your attention to some of the many aspects surrounding this great question in order to a clearer realization of the monetary conditions under which the great majority of our Clergy have been working. And in doing so I recognize, as His Grace has remarked, that no one in particular is to blame for the present condition of affairs which is due largely to *thoughtlessness* on the part of the laity generally as well as to *loose business methods* on the part of Wardens and Vestrymen. Moreover we have inherited from the previous generation the generally accepted tradition that a Parson *ought to be poor, financially*, and in a most thoughtless manner we of to-day continue to allow him to suffer much unnecessary anxiety and discomfort—to the detriment of the Church's work as well as to our own personal loss.

First then as to the salaries themselves. Wishing to know what improvement had taken place since last Synod, when Your Grace so earnestly urged us to greater attention to this matter, I asked our Diocesan Missionary, Mr. Jeffery, for the result of his labours in this connection, since he was requested to visit every mission paying its Vicar less than the minimum stipend of \$800.00. I am gratified to find resulting from the Missionary's efforts that some progress has been made. Some seventeen missions

have been visited more or less thoroughly with this result: Morris—increase \$100.00—making the stipend \$800, the *minimum*; Clanwilliam— increase \$100,— stipend now \$800, or the *minimum*; Stonewall— increase \$250, making the stipend \$850, being \$50 in excess of the minimum, and the mission becoming self-supporting; Binscarth— an increase from \$600 to \$1000, thereby relinquishing the Mission Grant of \$200, and becoming self-supporting. I need not, however, extend the list further than to say that with one or two exceptions, the *minimum* stipend has been secured or promised in all of the places visited. With two or three exceptions, apart from Winnipeg and the two Parishes already named, while happily many of our Clergy are being paid the *minimum* of \$800, quite a large number are receiving much less. To give you an example or two: One Clergyman, with 21 years service to his credit, received last year \$540. His average salary has been about \$550. While in this particular case there is a parsonage, the maintenance of a horse cost \$60 annually. This man has a wife and several children. As he himself tells me “rigorous and painful economy has been at times most necessary.” While this is a very exceptional case, surely that such should exist to-day is painful to contemplate.

Take another case: One Parson furnishes me with a detailed statement of his expenditures, as taken from actual records, during the past three years. His household consists of 5 persons—himself, wife and three children. His average annual cost has been \$955, while his salary has never exceeded \$800, thus leaving an annual debt of about \$150. In

his desire to "make both ends meet" this man has been driven into a *side line*— in this case the dairy business. He has kept a cow and some hens, the two netting about \$100 each year, but yet leaving a net debt each year of fully \$50. In this as in other cases the unpaid debts may be found in the ledgers of the local merchants.

In the case of another his last year's expenses amounted to \$702.90, exclusive of such items as clothing, life insurance and furniture. His fuel cost \$100. His livery \$100. His total income was \$800, with a house. He just kept free of debt. His insurance, carried with some of the local lodges, he maintained by acting as financial secretary to them and which yielded a trifling sum.

In another case where the stipend was \$625, the sum of \$96 was paid for rent and \$75 for the keep of a horse, thus reducing the living income to \$454, on which to keep himself, wife and one child. There was surely some painful economy experienced in this little home.

But not to linger longer here, suffice it to say that while we note with thankfulness the fact that an increasing number of our Clergy are receiving the *minimum* of \$800, yet the income of a very considerable number still stands at about \$700 and many even below that figure. And let me remind you in this connection, gentlemen, of the great broad and uncomfortable fact that one of the questions submitted has disclosed and which is, that with a couple of possible exceptions, and exclusive of a few Rectories outside of Winnipeg, no married clergyman

finds it possible to provide reasonable home comforts, educate the children in a becoming manner, and keep free of debt, on the present stipend, notwithstanding that great economy, in some cases of a rigorous and painful sort, is practised. Brethren, I commend this condition of affairs to your thoughtful consideration.

A passing word as to the manner of payment of the stipends. From the information I have I believe every conceivable method under the sun is in vogue. In some Missions there are stations that pay quarterly *when the funds are in hand*, and when not the Parson must do without. At others the Parson "takes" the collection of 50 to 75 cents, applies it on account, but such dribblets are of no real value to him. At others \$5 or \$10 is paid when applied for. In other Missions there are stations that pay *once a year* and then only when the funds are in hand, the balance being carried over into the new year. Happily there are a few missions that pay quarterly or monthly, but they are very exceptional. The sum of the matter is, my brethren, that with few exceptions, outside of the Rectories and a few Missions, not only are the stipends at a disgracefully low level, but as if to "add injury to insult" they are paid most haphazardly and irregularly and in a manner to cause serious embarrassment to the Clergy. Business concerns pay their employees monthly and even bi-monthly. Mechanics are paid weekly or bi-monthly. Executive officers and Managers are paid usually monthly. Why not the Parson? I earnestly plead for a radical change in this respect. I urge the monthly method as the most satisfactory—alike to the people and the Parson

But to touch, briefly, upon another phase of this question. I refer now to the Parsonage. It is indeed a great blessing that so many Parsonages have been provided. But for these the situation must be unbearable. Yet I find a very considerable number of Clergy are paying rent out of very small incomes. The annual cost runs from \$50 all the way up to \$150. In some cases the people share equally the cost with the Parson. One man paid last year \$150 for rent out of an income of less than \$800,—while his livery cost him \$120. In another \$96 was paid for house rent out of an income of \$620. In several cases from \$50 to \$75 is paid. Let us hope that in all such cases a special effort will be made to provide a free house to the married Incumbent.

But I hasten on to a very important branch of this question—I mean the driving outfit. With the exception of a very few large centres, such as Brandon, Portage la Prairie and Selkirk, a driving outfit is essential to the Parson in this country of unwieldy Missions if he is to maintain the outposts and visit his people during the week. Yet I make bold to say that we have scarcely begun to realize the extent of the financial burden thereby involved. To begin at the beginning. There is the initial cost. In the case of a team, including the buggy, cutter, robes, harness and some minor trappings the total cost is from \$400 to \$450. And in most cases it is a cruelty to animals to attempt the necessarily long drives over these prairies with a single horse. A team is required. But even in the case of a single horse the cost approximates \$300. I am aware of the outfit grant of \$100, which many of us have thought was

quite liberal, but, gentlemen, even with it, your newly-ordained man is launched with a debt to struggle with of from \$200 to \$300 in the first year of his ministry. Remember the average man starts without a dollar to his name. He has been perhaps helped through College, and most probably must purchase his first clerical suit on credit. But in addition to the initial cost of the driving outfit there is the annual cost of its maintenance, and perhaps there is a phase of this that but few of us have realized. Horses and rigs will not last forever. These have to be renewed, which adds to the financial burden. To give you an example or two. One Parson has in fourteen years bought 5 horses, 4 having been sold at greatly reduced prices, and he has bought 6 buggies, none being new except the first. Another has spent in 5 years \$275 on buggies and cutters. These two cases reflect the general experience of the Clergy in this country of long distances. Then there is, of course, the ordinary expense of the keep of a horse or team. This is a tax on the income of from \$50 to \$75 per annum in the case of a single horse, and from \$100 to \$150 for a team. Surely such an expense is most serious, constituting as it does from 10 per cent, to nearly 20 per cent. of the total income. Yet the vast majority of our Clergy cannot escape it. They must either keep a horse or hire livery. In either case the expense is out of all proportion to the small incomes. What layman would think of keeping a driving outfit for pleasure in this country on an income of \$800 or less and mean to pay his way? Yet our Missionaries are compelled necessarily to assume such a financial burden, not, however, for

pleasure but that they may carry on their necessary work.

Now I pass on to the matter of vacations. Every intelligent business man, every business corporation or company, now recognizes the necessity of a reasonable vacation to every employee if that employee may be expected to give his best service. As a general thing the commercial man is given a fortnight *each* year with *full pay*, his duties being performed by some of his fellows. Now how does the Parson fare? Very badly, I think you will admit when you realize the situation. In the first place the Clergy as a body aver that vacations are out of the question on the present scale of incomes. There is not only the expense of the vacation itself, but there is also the expense of *supply* during the Incumbent's absence and which, under the practice that generally obtains, is borne by the Incumbent himself—not by the parish or mission. Let me give you a few examples of the self-denial of our Clergy in this connection. One Clergyman has taken one vacation in 23 years; another, one in 18 years; another, one in 14 years; another, one in 15 years; another who has served 17 years took 3 weeks following an attack of Typhoid fever, and 11 years later he took two weeks to accompany the Bishop on a visitation to an Indian district. Another has taken one Sunday off in 16 years—the Parson's "fortnight" I presume. Two others have yet to take their first vacations, though each has 12 years service to his credit. But I need not further multiply cases. Large numbers have not had any vacation since their ordination four to eight years since, and, as I have re-

marked, no vacation is possible on the present stipend. Wardens and Vestrymen, with a few exceptions, have not yet recognized the necessity, yes the *necessity*, of a vacation to the Parson, at the expense of the Parish or Mission, in so far at least as the supply of a substitute is concerned. And if a vacation to the Parson himself is out of the question, because of financial inability, how about the good wife and mother, who has toiled on, year in and year out, in the home and probably amongst the people as well, economizing at every turn, to keep a little home together? I am sure, my fellow Laymen, that this condition of affairs is due largely to *thoughtlessness* on our part, and I plead with you to give it your most thoughtful consideration. Your Grace-- I should like to see it a Rule of Synod that every clergyman should have an annual vacation of a fortnight or a month every alternate year, and that the Parish or Mission should provide the necessary substitute at its own expense. Such a general dearth of vacations as exists in this Diocese can have but one result, and that is the sapping prematurely of the vitality of our Clergy, working in a most trying climate and under most trying conditions.

I fear, your Grace, I am imposing on the indulgence of this House, yet I venture to hope that the importance of the subject, which I desire to have thoroughly discussed, will be my justification for occupying so much of the valuable time of the Synod. I will, however, listen to a conclusion. I have but one or two more aspects of this question to which I desire to direct attention.

I have referred in the series of questions submitted to contributions in kind. I find that, in this Diocese, with less than a half-dozen exceptions, they may be left out of the calculation. Incidentally, however, in this connection I find, as I have known to have been done in the East, that contributions in kind are turned in on account of guarantees to the Stipends, at much higher prices than are justified by the ruling market price at the time. In other words the Parson could purchase for *cash* the same goods at from 10 per cent. to 20 per cent. less. For example:—Hay is delivered, charged at \$5 per ton, while \$3.50 was the real market price; oats charged from 2 to 3 cents per bushel in excess; wood delivered of such inferior quality as to render it unsaleable, yet it is turned in on account of the subscription—and the Parson—well he *must be silent*, though he gets the worst of the bargain.

Then there is the matter of transfers—that is the removal of a clergyman from one Mission to another. Who pays the cost? The Parson. As one man tells me, he has been moved 4 times in 14 years at a total cost to him of \$200. Such an expense has been borne by an already overtaxed income.

And now let me speak of a very important matter—one indeed of profound importance. I refer to the education of the children of our Clergy. This should surely appeal to us laymen. We recognize the importance and necessity of giving our children an education befitting their station in life, to prepare and enable them to provide for themselves as well as to discharge their duties to society and the State. In

a word we aim at fitting our children to become useful and worthy citizens of our Country. But the education of the children, to many of our Clergy, is a most serious problem—and increasingly so as the children grow older.. Speaking generally the public school of the district is the most that can be enjoyed. The salary will not permit of greater advantages. I have several instances given to me where the lad, who had thoughts of reading for orders, must be put to work. In one case where the Clergyman had managed to save in 13 years about \$400, was transferred to another Mission about 5 years ago, since which he has been obliged to spend, not only his savings but \$200 besides. In other words he is now \$200 in debt or \$600 worse off than he was 5 years ago. This debt he must, as an honourable man prepare to discharge: and so he cuts down his expenses to the detriment of his children, no other solution being possible. He stops the music lessons to his two girls, who were thus being educated and prepared to earn their own living, and puts his boy to work in order thereby to supplement the revenue and thus help to reduce the debt. Gentlemen, at this juncture I forbear giving further particulars in this respect, but I commend the matter to your most serious consideration.

And now my fellow laymen, recognizing, as we all do, the impossibility of the Clergy themselves, for obvious reasons, taking the initiative and discussing this pressing question of clerical stipends; I have, in obedience to the call of duty, and believing that this question lies at the root of much of the unrest that exists to-day in this Diocese, taken the course I

have, and have endeavored to place before you some facts and considerations connected with this question, which I regard as most potent and which, I feel confident, will not only appeal to you but also receive your most earnest consideration and attention. While I have pressed them upon your attention with all the fervor I could summon, yet I hope not in any fault-finding manner, though I would have you and your respective constituencies regard the condition of affairs as most serious—and demanding our immediate attention.

This movement, I rejoice to observe, is gathering momentum in Canada to-day, but not a day too soon. Synod after Synod has discussed the matter. The Diocese of Ottawa, at its last Synod, has sounded the Cry—a living wage for the Missionary. They propose a minimum stipend of \$700 and to guarantee this to the Missionaries, propose raising a special sum of \$10,000—assessing each Deanery for its proportion, in order to be in a position to supplement, when necessary, the income received, should that fall below the \$700. This is the scheme, if I have read correctly the press reports. But \$700 in the East is equal to about \$900 in this country of excessive cost. There can be no doubt, in my opinion, that this question of a greatly underpaid Ministry is most detrimental to the best interests of our beloved Church. From every Bishop—from the Atlantic to the Pacific—there goes up the cry for more men—not so much money—as *men*. And, your Grace, I know not what your own judgment or the judgment of this Synod may be upon this matter, but I have no hesitation in declaring for myself on the floor of this House, that the miserably small stipends generally paid to our Clergy throughout Canada have had very much to do with keeping large numbers of our young men from entering upon the Ministerial office. The disgracefully inadequate stipends generally paid have contributed much to the great dearth of Candidates for the Ministry. Can you much wonder that the young man of ability, contemplating the Ministerial office

as well as the *extreme poverty* that awaits the average Parson, should shrink from the sacred calling when in so many other worthy directions may be found a sufficient competency in return for ability and industry, while at the same time knowing there will be opportunities, as a *layman*, to promote the interests of the Church, and to some extent at least thus meet the soul's inmost desire ?

I plead therefore for a much higher standard of compensation—for a substantial addition to the *minimum* stipend. For by a singular though perhaps necessary method, on the part of the Executive, the Parsons rarely, if ever, receive more than the *minimum*. The Executive supplements the sum guaranteed locally to the extent of the *minimum* only, and the larger the amount paid locally, the smaller the grant. While it is difficult to blame any party concerned, yet the Parson himself shares not the gradual prosperity of his Mission under the method named. In a word—the Synod's *minimum* is actually the Parson's *maximum*, and that minimum is *not a living wage in this Diocese of expensive living*. Let us then, my Brethren of the Laity, *raise the standard all round*. I plead not for what might be regarded as "fat" incomes, but I *do* plead that the Clergy in view of their years of preparation, of their great responsibility, of the nature of their work, of the many demands upon them, receive at least a "living wage" that which will enable them to meet in full the reasonable needs of a modest home, and thus be relieved of that constant financial anxiety which at present in a variety of ways prevents them from being *at their best* in the parish. Let us also make it possible for the Church to secure to her Ministry a greatly increased number of the solid and capable sons of our Mother Church and who have been so largely drifting into other walks in life. The Church needs the very best material—in spirituality, brains and sanctified commonsense—if she is to cope successfully with the great problems that confront her to-day.

Your Grace and Brethren, I thank you for your great indulgence on this occasion, and will conclude by reading, as simply as I can, some lines that I noticed in a recent Church paper and which some of you have, doubtless, also noticed. But as they are very felicitous when stipends are in question, I will read them for the benefit of those who have not already seen them. They are a parody on Tennyson's immortal "Charge of the Light Brigade"—

"The Charge of the Six Hundred."

Ho! Ye good Clergymen,
Come, lead us onward;
We, for your livelihood,
Promise six hundred.

Well your light service paid,
Let no demurs be made;
Apostles, 'irs, never had,
Greenbacks, six hundred.

On march the ministers—
Scarce a remonstrance stirs,
Although full well they know
Their flocks have blundered;

Theirs not to make reply,
Though seeing no reason why,
That scripture does not apply,
Preachers should live, not die,
Live on six hundred.

Charges to right of them,
Charges to left of them,
Charges confronting them,
Income encumbered.

Flanked by rude butchers' carts
Bled by sharp traders' arts,
All bound to have their parts,
Of the six hundred.

Millers and market men,
Pedlars who call again,
Agents and beggars, then—
Oh, how poor ministers

Pockets are plundered;
Still up the prices go,
All things for use or show,

Labor with saw or hoe—
 Nothing but preaching low—
 Low at six hundred.
 Blackcoat, its threads are bare—
 Daughters cry, "Naught to wear,"
 And the boys almost swear,
 'Bout their old garments,
 So easily sundered.

Six months, perhaps they may
 Keep hunger's wolf away;
 Live narrowly, scantily,
 If promptly they get their pay—
 Get the six hundred.

But rent bills to right of them,
 Store bills to left of them,
 Charged upon all sides:
 How fight the year through,
 Oft they have wondered.

Still they go struggling on,
 No funds to draw upon,
 Cash reserved, fled and gone.
 Not a dime left to them,
 Of the six hundred.

Well earned the benison,
 Sought by thee, Tennyson,
 On Bal'clava's heroes—
 Who faltered not, any son,
 Though thousand guns thundered;
 But lo! Here's a light brigade,
 Sustains a whole year's raid,
 On their small stipends made,
 Till lives not ere a shade
 Of their six hundred.

Brethren, as a final word let me urge you on
 your return home to get your Wardens and leading
 laymen together and, looking this question squarely
 in the face, putting your shoulders to the wheel, and
 working unitedly, you will accomplish great things
 for all concerned—the Church, the Clergyman, and
 yourselves.

I commend the resolution to the favourable
 consideration of this Synod.

